The Southerner.

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THE SOUTHERNER.

GEO. HOWARD, Jr., Editor & Proprietor

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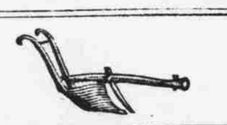
AGRICULTURAL.



FOR THE SOUTHERNER.

TO THE FARMERS OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY.

For some time past, I have been anxiously looking to see an Agricultural paper established in your county, having been somewhat informed of your unexampled success in farming. Two years have elapsed since I heard it suggested, that a paper of this kind would be published in Tarboro'; but since that time, I have heard nothing more upon the subject.

From the best information which I can obtain, Agricultural Societies and Agricultural papers have shown themselves to be, the mainsprings of the great improvements, which have been made in farming in other States of our Union. And I cannot see how the farmers of North Carolina should wish or expect to be taught scientific farming in a way, different from those in other States.

What has given rise to the great spirit of emulation, which is so generally spread abroad in your county? I am sure that if you were to answer the question, you would readily admit, that you are greatly indebted to your Agricultural Society and the various agricultural papers taken among you, for such a spirit of enterprise.

But where are these papers published? There is not a single one coming from your own State; and coming as they do from others, the arrival of each one brings with it stronger evidence that North Carolina should have her own Agricultural paper. How much longer will you be content, that we shall be entirely dependant upon other States for our Agricultural as well as every other kind of information? When we have among us Staton, Collins, Burgwyn, Carraway, Carter, Blount, and many others, who are well calculated to deal out instruction to those who wish to farm successfully in our State, why do we continue to look entirely elsewhere for information, than in our own land? Our system of farming must necessarily be different from that of other States. Here there are wild lands to subdue as well as worn out fields to renovate; and our natural resources when clearly developed will prove to be greater than those of any other State. It has been remarked by a truly great man, that a people will be almost bound to become what their natural advantages enable them to become, and if such be true (and I have no reason to doubt it) there is a better day for us yet to come. But Patrick Henry very justly said that North Carolinians have heard so much, to the disparagement of North Carolina, that they have learned to believe it.

I have proposed to publish in the town of Washington a monthly paper to be called the Farmer's Journal, to be devoted entirely to the interests of the farmer. I am well aware that in many respects I am deficient on those subjects, which are important to be known by a conductor of such a publication; but an enterprise of this kind, like every other, must assume an embryo form in the beginning.

I do not pretend to set myself up as a paragon in farming, by no means, for I am desirous to obtain any information upon the subject of agricultural improvement, come whence it may. I design to devote my entire time to the management of the Journal, and I am satisfied that if the farmers of Edgecombe and other counties in our State contribute that aid, which is due to an enterprise of this kind, that my paper shall soon take a stand with the majority of such publications. In setting forth this paper I open to you a channel, through which you can diffuse the knowledge, which you have acquired, to the entire State.

I am resolved to issue the first number of the paper early in March, and it would afford me great pleasure to give place to several communications from the farmers of your county. I have seen in a number of the American Farmer that one of you has ventured to come out and I would here remind him, that "charity begins at home."

What we want upon the subject of farming is a true statement of facts, in regard to what has been done, and what may be done by adopting the various popular improvements of the day. Since I have issued my Prospectus, I have been into the counties of Hyde, and Martin; and I am glad to say, that I met with a warm reception from the farmers in those counties. I have learned within a few days, that the people of Hyde have begun to arouse. Since my visit there, farming is the subject of general conversation. The question is often asked, how many subscribers I shall get in Edgecombe? but so far I have not been able to answer; but I hope before many weeks I shall be able to give such an answer, as will greatly encourage other counties to enlarge their lists. I am aware that already there are a large number of Agricultural papers taken among you, but this does not preclude your taking another which will be published in your own State and near your own county. Farmers of old Edgecombe, what say you? Will you not lend your aid to a North Carolinian, and a native born son of your own county, in elevating the present degraded condition of the farmer among us? I make this appeal, for the reason that you have experienced the good results from reading upon the subject of Agriculture; and plain evidence of this fact is to be seen by any observing man, when passing through your county. I say, that it is high time that there was an Agricultural society in every county of the State and a State Agricultural society, and then the time would not be distant when the first State Agricultural Fair for North Carolina would be held in the town of Tarboro' What say you, farmers of Edgecombe, to this. Only give the Farmers Journal a good list of subscribers, and I will press this upon the minds of the Agricultural community of our State.

JNO. F. TOMPKINS.

From the Journal of Agriculture.

THE GRAMMAR OF AGRICULTURE.

BY PROF. J. J. MAPES, NEWARK, N. J.

NO. IV.

We propose in our present number to show the power of the soil to retain manures, and the means of improving this property when required.

For a long time it was supposed that all materials soluble in water would pass downward in solution, and thus be lost to plants—those who worked clayey soils claimed that, because water could not readily percolate their soils, that hence, they were NOT *leachy*, and therefore retained manures—while other operators with sandy soils argued that manures passed downward and were soon lost to the surface soil.

All these positions are false. It is true that a fair proportion of alumina is valuable to soils, and in the absence of carbonaceous matter is absolutely necessary for the retention of manures, but it is not true that the tenacious property of clay need exist to such an extent as to prevent the free filtration of pure water before the manures will be retained—for many soils which will pass pure water readily, will still retain, from impure water all its impurities, permiting only the pure water to descend. Indeed this is true of all arable soils, and if it were not so, the water in all our wells would be unfit to drink, from being surcharged with soluble organic matter.

Even the brown fluids of a barn-yard will not leach downward in the soil, without leaving all the fœtid matter in the surface. Dig in an old barn-yard, but a few inches below where the soil has been before disturbed, and it will be found not to have become dark colored, and not to contain any undue proportion of the soluble matters resident at the surface, but to be like the sub-soil of adjoining fields.

Alumina (clay) has the curious property of receiving and retaining all animal and vegetable substances, and their gaseous products until abstracted again, by growing plants, and for this reason a free clayey loam will purify water during its passages through the surface soil, retaining all the fertilizing substances originally held in the solution, and permitting the pure water to pass downward. Nor does this retaining power cease with organic substances alone, for many of the alkalies are also retained, and all of them to a certain extent. Excess of lime, potash or magnesia will pass down and therefore the chemist finds variable proportions of these alkalies in our well water.

This peculiar property of clay was noted by Mr. Teschmaker of Boston in his public addresses many years since, and in our published addresses before the American Institute, as far back as 1840, the same truths are set forth. Within the last two years, Professor Way and other English chemists are claiming this as a new discovery.

Alumina is not the only substance in soils which has this retaining power, for carbon in every form, has similar properties, and it is not important whether charcoal dust be artficially added, or exist in the soil by the decay of former vegitation or of manures; for in either case carbon is the result, and as such, has similar retainig powers to those of clay. Thus charcoal dust placed for a time near a fermenting dung heap, will deceive and retain the gasse arising from recomposition, and if placed in the soil will give out these gasses again to the roots of growing plants. Privies, stables, &c., are rendered inodorous by the use of charcoal dust. Decomposed peat, turf, swamp muck, &c., are but varied forms carbon, with some more partially decomposed vegetable matter. The dark color of soils is due to the presence of carbon; humus, vegetable mould, &c., are but modifications of carbon.

All know that an old and black garden soil will retain manure longer than field soils, and that a less quantity of manure will act in them, for the simple reason, that the carbon (charcoal,) contained in them, and arising from previous decay, retains the resultant gases from the decomposition of the manure until used up by plants.

Let any farmer try the following experiment and he will be satisfied of the truth of our statement.

Prepare four barrels by taking out the upper heads and boring small holes in the lower heads, stand the barrels on end and fill them with the following substances.

No. 1. Barren sand with one-tenth the bulk of clay intimately mixed throughout the mass.

No. 2. Barren sand with one-tenth of finely ground charcoal dust.

No. 3. A dark loam on garden soil.

No. 4. Barren sand alone.

Pour on all four barrels the brown solution from the barn-yard, and it will be found, that the water running out of the bottoms of Nos. 1, 2, and 3, will be colorless and without smell; while that from No. 4, will be unaltered and as offensive as when placed on the top.

The question may now be asked, "if the soluble results of vegetable decay do not filter downward, what becomes of them?" We answer, that resident in the earth's surface, from the combined influences of sun and air, they decay, and take the gaseous form; if the soil contains either clay or carbon, these gases are absorbed by them, until abstracted by growing plants. But if these substances are not resident in the soil, then the gases rise into the atmosphere, and are absorbed by better prepared soils elsewhere, or are carried to the ocean and are thus lost for a time from the land.

Let our readers reflect that both the vegetable and animal productions of the earth's surface are continually decaying, and that nothing but the facts we have stated, can account for continued fertility. For if the results of decay could filter downward in solution with water, long before this time, the whole amount of organic constituents would have passed below the fertile surface, all our wells would be filled with masses of filth, and both animal and vegetable life would have ceased. The simple facts are, that all organic manures do decay in the earth's surface and are only lost by rising in the gaseous form, and not by sinking below the roots of plants, and therefore they should be plowed under to such a depth that their resultant gases when rising shall meet with a sufficient quantity of alumina or carbon to arrest them.

From the Albany Daily State Register.

AGRICULTURE IN CALIFORNIA.

Gold is not the only source of wealth in California. But her soil is rich, and in many localities capable of immense production. Agriculture appears to be attracting much attention, and has been very profitable during the past season. We find in the San Francisco "Courier," of the 14th November, a notice of an award of premiums for best agricultural specimens, to a Mr. Horner. Col. A. Williams delivered the address on the occasion, and in speaking to Mr. H., said:

"In your case we have seen, while the public mind was absorbed by the irresistable maelstroom of the gold mania, a single individual in four years even more successful in developing the agricultural, than others the mineral wealth which slumbers in the bosom of our soil, under peculiar disadvantages, from want of proper implements, proper seeds, and sufficient manual help—at first aided only by the labor of three natives of the forest, till the teeming soil in grateful return for her cultivation, yielded her riches, and in the fifth year; enabling you the present season, with the average aid of 60 co-laborers, to realize from 200 acres of land in the Santa Clara valley;

Potatoes	120,000	bushels
Onions	6,000	"
Table beets	4,000	"
Turnips	1,000	"
Tomatoes	1,200	"
Barley	5,000	"
Pumpkins	30	tons
Solid headed cabbages	108,000	
Chickens	600	
Eggs	1,200	
Onion seed	800	lbs.
Beet "	200	"
Cabbage "	100	"

And thus at a cost of about $50,000, present prices some $200,000."

Mr. Horner, in his response to this, said:

"I almost regret that you should have dared to state the truth. Your statements among our friends in the Atlantic States will appear so monstrous, as to impeach their credibility, and will engender unbelief by their very apparent monstrosity. I trust that this beginning may be followed up on each succeeding years by such exhibitions as will fully develope the resources of our young and vigorous State."

This large yield as the bestowment of the premium indicates, is unusual; but it tends, nevertheless, to show the agricultural capacity of the soil. Nearly every thing that is grown in the other States of the Union, can be produced here; the grains and grasses, and fruits of the North; and the sugar, cotton, and rice of the South. As we approach the center of the State, the "banana, the orange, the lemon, the olive, the fig, the plantain, the nectarine, the almond, the apricot, and the pomegranate of the South, mingle in the same luxuriant gardens of Los Angelos, with the peach, the pear, the cherry, the plum, the quince, and the apple of the North—the fruits of gigantic size and delicious taste, furnishing to man and beast the richest and most nutritious food; the beautiful salmon, of the noble Sacramento, often weighing thirty, forty, and in some instances sixty pounds, vieing with any, either in fineness of texture and richness of flavor, as well as in size; and one uncommon article of fine, white sugar, exudation of a species of pine tree, called the sugar pine; the successive range of mountains, whose extent is lost to view in the distance, waving with harvests of oats, the spontaneous production of the soil; solid trees of the redwood, on the banks of the Trinity and Shasta rivers, sixty-eight feet in circumference; hollow ones whose cavity has sheltered sixteen men and twenty mules for the night; pines crowning the dizzy peaks of the Sierra Nevada, three hundred and eighty feet in height, the first two hundred and fifty feet without a branch or limb—an extent of growth so far beyond the ordinary size, as to seem almost incredible, but well known, and seen, and verified by the uniform and concurrent testimony of many."

The San Francisco "Picayune" says, that there can be no doubt but that in less "than two years, California will raise a sufficient amount of wheat to supply her inhabitants with flour, and in ten years she will undoubtedly export whatever may be required by the ports on the Pacific. There is not a country in the world which can produce wheat to a greater advantage, either as regards the return in quantity, or the quality of the grain. As soon as a few mills are put in operation, our farmers will turn their attention to the raising of this grain in preference to all others, and we will be no longer dependent upon the Atlantic States or South America, for so important an article as flour."

We regard these facts as the most important that have reached us in relation to El dorado. It has been heretofore pretty generally supposed that her soil, for the most part, was a barren sand, incapable of producing the necessaries of life, and but little of it fit for cultivation. The following from the address of Col. Williams, on the occasion above referred to, will give a still better idea of the fruitfulness of the Golden Land:

"I hold in my hand a statement signed by twelve citizens of the county of Santa Cruz—Messrs. McLean, Gibson, Millison, Peck, Clements, Pedriet, Mills, Stevens, McHeury, Sambone, Kista and Loveland—gentlemen of unquestionable integrity, an extract from which is as follows:

"On land owned and cultivated by Mr. James Williams, an onion grew to the enormous weight of twenty-one pounds: on this land a turnip was grown which equalled exactly in size the head of a flour barrel. On land owned and cultivated by Thomas Follon, a cabbage grew, which measured while growing 13 feet 6 inches around its body; its weight is not known. The various cereal grains also grow to a height of from 6 to 12 feet. One red-wood tree in the vally, known as Fremont's tree, measures over fifty feet in circumference, and is nearly 300 feet high. Added to these astonishing productions are, a beet grown by Mr. Isaac Brannan, at San Jose, weighing 63 pounds, carrots 3 feet in length, weighing 40 pounds. At Stockton, is a turnip weighing 100 pounds. In the latter city, at a party for twelve persons, of a single potato larger than the size of an ordinary hat, all partook, leaving at least the half untouched.

"These may be superlatives, but they do not exist, and they show what our climate and soil are capable of producing. Nor are these more seemingly incredible than the well known fact of a portion of our State, nearly 600 miles in length, and 50 in breadth, whose every foot of ground from hill top to valley, is more or less impregnated with gold of every conceivable form and size, from dust up to lumps weighing 30 pounds

"But let us cast our eyes around this hall, and what do we see—even from this hasty collection and casual contribution—an agricultural, botanical, geological, mineral, and floral exhibition, embracing nearly one thousand varieties of pressed flowers, of every hue, and of surpassing brilliancy, nearly 200 varieties of which are illustrated by truthful and beautiful drawings; seeds of more than 3,000 varieties of native flowers; 20 varieties of lily and other bulbous roots, embracing the remarkable soap plant, rivaling the finest boast of the toilet, and adding to it its healing qualities, as if provided by nature for the double purpose of sanitary and abulent properties for the native sons of the forest; specimens of 1,000 varieties of the principal quartz veins and soils of the State; about 20 varieties of the principal grasses and clovers, many of the specimens pressed, embracing the burr clover, that feed to fatness "the cattle of a thousand hills," when all other sustenance is parched and withered. Shelton's mammoth clover, whose stalks from one root covered an area of 31 square feet, some of the stalks 6 feet long, a half inch in diameter, and the clover head five inches in circumferance; single stalks of the white lily, producing 100 flowers, of indescribable delicacy and beauty; beautiful specimens of minerals and pressed flowers from H. Pratten, Esq., of Nevada; stalks of the oats gathered by Mr. Shelton, 13 feet high; specimens of wheat and barley having 150 and 200 mammoth stalks springing from one root, the produce of a single seed; the red sugar beet, grown by Mr. L. M. Beard, of San Jose, twenty-eight inches in circumference and weighing 47lbs.; some from the luxuriant gardens of Alderman Green, of this city, of only two months growth, weighing six or seven pounds; cucumbers, raised by the same, eighteen inches in length; onions, cultivated by Messrs. Chamberlain & Musser, five, six, and seven inches in diameter, and weighing three and four pounds each—nearly 70,000 pounds to an acre—and the whole number from the acre supposed to average one pound each; potatoes, from Mr. H. Speel, of Santa Cruz, 120 pounds from five vines of a single hill; one from Mr. B. J. Stevens, of Santa Clare, 13 inches in length, 27 inches in circumference, and weighing 7½ pounds; the Russian bald barley, grown by Mr. Johnson, on his ranch, upon the banks of Bear river, weighing 66 pounds to the bushel, with a kernel nearly double the size of large wheat; raspberries five inches in circumference; barley from the San Jose valley, of which 695 bushels were produced from less than five acres of land; some from the farm of Madame Scoofy, of Sonora, where 12 acres, by ordinary cultivation, produced a crop of 53,000 lbs.; these walls, festooned with luscious grapes from Captain Maltby, of Los Angelos—single bunches from the garden of Gen. Vallejo, at Sonoma, weighing 10 pounds; apples, peaches, figs, and other fruits of enormous size, from the same; from Horner, tomatoes weighing two pounds each; pumpkins and squashes 10 to 140 pounds; cabbages two feet in diameter, and weighing 50 pounds; onions, beets, and potatoes of enormous size, not isolated, but by hundreds of bushels, the top onion produced the first season from the ordinary seed; with samples of wheat and barley of uncommon size and weight; and added to the exhibition are also beautiful specimens of the daguerrean and photographic art from Mr. Shew, and also from Mr. Bradley; lemon syrup of exceeding excellence, manufactured and exhibited by Messrs. Sweet & Co., of this city; exquisite feather work by Madame Paacard: besides samples and specimens of countless varieties of plants, herbs, vines, fruits, grains, and esculents of exceeding size and singular perfection, collected by Mr. Shelton, to the enunciation of which the proper extent of this address is wholly inadequate. Among the tropical productions introduced by him, are coffee, ginger, banana, plantain, and pomegranate, which are now in progress of successful cultivation, and he has this day received from Valparaiso, a choice assortment of rare and valuable exotics, the entire stock of a greenhouse, embracing two thousand of the choicest French and Italian grape vines, fifty varieties choice pear trees, six varieties of plums, three of apricots, twenty of peaches, five of currants, and seven thousand asparagus plants. Of flowers, there are fifty varieties of jessamines, four of althea fratres or African Hibiscus, eight of chrysantheum, twelve of althea, the wax plant, pinks, cacti, dhalias, and over one thousand rose bushes."

He that by the plough would thrive,
Must either hold himself, or drive.

Benefits of Tobacco Smoke.—Mr. Robert Ellis, surgeon, the principal editor of the official catalogue of the London Exhibition, has the following remarks, (vol. 1. page 180,) which must gladden the hearts of our smoke-raising brethren:

"The total quantity of tobacco retained for home consumption, in 1848, amounted to nearly 17,000,000 lbs. North America alone produces annually upwards of 200,000,000 lbs. The consumption of this mass of vegetable material would yield about 340,000,000 lbs. of carbonic acid gas; so that the yearly increase of carbonic acid gas from tobacco smoke alone cannot be less than 1,000,000,000 lbs., a large contribution to the annual demand for this gas made upon the atmosphere for the vegetation of the world. Henceforth let no one twit the smoker with idleness and unimportance. Every pipe is an agricultural furnace—every smoker, a manufacturer of vegetation, the consumer of a weed that he may rear more largely his own provisions."

☞ The Legislature of Georgia has passed a bill giving the election of the Judges of the Superior Court to the people. The following are its most prominent provisions:

"The people of each judicial circuit are to elect a judge on the 1st Monday in October, 1853, and every four years thereafter. The Coweta, Macon, Blue Ridge, and South-western circuits hold their first election in October, 1855, and every four years sucessively. No one can vote for Judge who has not resided in his circuit one year, and in his county six months, prior to the election; then is restricted in voting to the county in which he resides. No one can be elected judge who has not lived ten years in the State, three years in his circuit and been a practising attorney for five years prior to the election.

☞ 'Who is that lovely girl?' exclaimed the witty Lord Norbury in company with his friend Counsellor Grant.

'Miss Glass,' replied the barrister.

'Glass,' reiterated the facetious judge. I should often be intoxicated could I place such a glass to my lips!'

☞ A Greek maiden being asked what portion she would bring to her husband replied, "I will bring him what gold cannot purchase; a heart unspotted, and virtue without a stain—which is all that descended to me from my parents."